

an invitation to attend, and already he felt that the moment so longed and sought for had arrived. He felt confident of success—this is easy to understand, for diffidence belongs to genius—and he smilingly pictured to himself his triumph.

Yet it was with some excitement of feeling, and some small trepidation at heart, that he finally set out for Bonn, whither the Capell-meister had preceded him, in order that none should say his pupil had made his *debut* under the open protection of a friend.

It was night when Ludwig reached his destination; and he made his way straight to the lodging that had been set aside for him during his stay in the capital.

On the morrow—soon after noon—he was sitting idly in his chamber, when a strange thing befell him. He fell into a light doze, and somehow in his slumber he seemed to be borne back, on the wings of time, to the days of his childhood. He and Felix were boys again. They both stood in the midst of an assembly of courtly personages, each had a violin in his hand, and both were playing. How fast Felix played! They were racing, he trying to outstrip his brother in the race. The ladies looked on, but their encouraging glances were all bent on the younger brother; they had all of them golden hair and blue eyes. How reproachfully the eyes seemed to look on him! He struggled in his sleep to escape them, and awoke—awoke as he had done long ago, to find the vision a creation of his imagination, but the sound that

had formed part of his dream a reality. He opened the door of his bedroom, just as he had done on that former occasion, and listened. The music grew louder; again the strains reached him from above. First a long steady note, like a sigh indefinitely prolonged—he had learnt the same trick himself with infinite difficulty—and then a burst of sweetness, of pathos, and of passion, the like of which had never come from his hand.

For the first time in his life he became conscious of his own deficiencies. Marvelling at the superior power of the invisible performer, he stumbled to the door, and made his way to the open air, to escape if possible the sounds themselves and the gloomy forebodings they awakened within him.

When he returned the house was silent. Some irresistible power seized him, and he stole up the stairs and towards the room from whence the music had come. The door was open and the room vacated, but he could discern, in the dim light of the winter afternoon, an open case on the table, and a violin within. Like a thief he drew near, and looked at it; he bent down: the label, "Stradivarius," was a sufficient guarantee of the quality of the instrument, even had he not heard it. There was another inscription besides. He raised the violin in his hand to look at it nearer: it was his brother's name, Felix. The ungoverned passion of a whole life-time seemed to be let loose in his soul. He took the violin, and with his trembling hands tore out the strings, and flinging the instrument from him on the floor, he crunched it, like a toy, beneath his heel. There he left it, and in a few moments more was in his own room again. He dressed, he scarcely knew how, in the Court garments that had been so carefully prepared for the occasion—the embroidered waistcoat, the silken hose, the buckled shoes that he was donning for the first time in his life—and, like a man in a hideous nightmare, he made his way to the carriage that was waiting to convey him to the Palace. In a few moments more he found himself standing—still as in a dream—upon the smooth parquet of the concert-room. The lights dazzled him by their brilliancy. The splendid toilettes, rustling fans, the murmur of voices, the glancing of bright eyes, the perfume that filled the air bewildered him.

The performance began. He played as he had never played before. Never was execution so brilliant—so faultless. Some unseen power seemed to drive his bow. The effect was startling. He might have been the ancient mariner telling his gruesome tale, and his audience the wedding-guests "who could not choose but ear."

The keener critics, accustomed to form a calm judgment in the midst of startling effects, professed to detect a flaw in the pitch, as though the musician's ear were not as sensitive as it might be, and a certain harshness of tone, that seemed to rob the instrument of the human tone in its voice; but the whole performance was so rapid, so gorgeous, that the general audience could only sit still and listen as in a fevered trance.

A brilliant passage brought the piece to an abrupt conclusion—almost with a crash as though some creature's heart-strings had been torn asunder. The triumph was immediate and complete. A burst of tremendous applause greeted the young musician. The moment ambition had crept was come at last. He bowed repeatedly, and then turned away. He felt the maestro's hand on his arm, and heard his proud voice in his ear—"My son, you have succeeded."

Ludwig tottered to a pillar, and stood there for a moment speechless. "You are ill, my pupil," said the old Capell-meister in evident consternation. "Come we will go. To-morrow you will see the Elector."

They made their way together through the deserted streets.

"To-morrow," said the old Capell-meister brightly. "To-morrow brings the introduction to the Elector."

Ludwig entered his room. On the table lay a note bearing his name, and in his brother's writing—

"Brother, I write this at the moment of my departure from this town, which only a few hours I entered with quite a different purpose in view. By accident I have just learnt of your arrival, and have heard of the errand which has brought you hither. Will it surprise you to learn that the same hope that guided your footsteps has also been my loadstone? Will it surprise you to learn that I also am a musician struggling for fame?"

"You yourself, brother were my earliest master. From you did I first discover my passion for music. We can never, then, be rivals; besides the sacred bonds of blood and affection preclude such a possibility. My success to-night was to have brought me a wife, but it would have lost me a brother.—Thine, "Felix."

Then, added hastily in a postscript, as though his generous heart had reproached him, in the face of his own bitter disappointment, with giving a scant and grudging measure of affection, were these words:—

"During your absence from the house to-day, I ventured to steal into your room to try your violin. It is good, but not, I think, equal to mine, which is the gift of a generous patron. I leave it behind in the hope that

Bouquet of Wheat Ears.

The accompanying illustration gives a very pretty way of making a bouquet for the winter, and if as artistically arranged, looks very pretty for some nook or corner of your room. It is something you might all have, but because so easy to procure, perhaps despised. All such decorations tend to make home more cheerful, and natural flowers will soon be gone.

Poesies for Wedding Rings.

The old English custom of having engraved upon the wedding ring a sweet sentiment has yet many followers, hence we give below a number of trite expressions, most of which were written and used during the time of Cromwell:

Death never parts Joy day and night
Such loving hearts, Be our delight.

Love and respect Divinely knit by
I do expect. (Grace are we;

No gift can show Late two; now one
The love I owe. the pledge here see.

Let him never take Endless my love
a wife As this shall prove.

That will not love Avoid all strife
her as his life. Twixt man and wife

In loving thee Joyful love
I love myself. This ring doth prove.

A heart content In thee, dear wife,
Can ne'er repent. I find new life.

In God and thee Of rapturous joy
Shall my joy be. I am the toy.

Love thy chaste wife In thee I prove
Beyond thy life. The joy of love.

Love and pray In loving wife
Night and day. Spend all thy life.

Great joy in thee In love abide
Continually. Till death divide.

My fond delight In unity
By day and night. Let's live and die.

Pray to love; Happy in thee
Love to pray. Hath God made me.

In thee, my choice, Silence ends strife
I do rejoice. With man and wife

Body and mind None can prevent
In thee I find. The Lord's intent.

Dear wife, thy rod God did decree
Doth lead to God. Our unity.

God alone I kiss the rod
Made us two one. From thee and God.

Eternally In love and joy
My love shall be. Be our employ.

All I refuse, Live and love;
And thee I choose. Love and live.

Worship is due To God and you.
To God and you. Continue our love.

I wish to thee True love will ne'er
All joy may be. forget.

In thee my love This ring doth bind
All joy I prove. Body and mind.

Beyond this life Endless as this
Love me, dear wife. Shall be our bliss.



BOUQUET OF HEADS.

you will make use of it on this occasion. God be with thee, and every success crown thy efforts."

When the old Capell-meister called for his protegee the next morning, in order to bring about the coveted introduction to the Elector, Ludwig had left the town, leaving no message behind him.

H. H. R.

An effective and easily made decoration to break a space upon a barren wall, is an eighteen inch square board, quite thin and covered smoothly with plush. Hang it diamond-wise by means of eyes screwed to the back; nail in the centre of this a carved or gilded bracket, large enough to hold a vase or figure, or else hang a pretty porcelain or some old fashioned plaque in the centre.

Love and joy I do rejoice
Can never cloy. In thee my choice.

The pledge I prove All I refuse
Of mutual love. But thee I choose.

I love the rod I change the life
And thee and God. Of maid to wife.

I love myself in loving thee. Endless my love
For thee shall prove.

Jemima Rann—"Good bye, 'Arry! Yer mustn't come no nearer the 'ouse, case missus sh'd see yer." 'Arry—"I see, my darlin'! You're afeared o' the green-eyed mornster jellossy."—[Fun.